

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

## **Environmentalists Urge Ministers to Consider Microbeads Ban**

### **Society for the Environment Echoes Calls by Parliamentary Group to Ban Microbeads**

Coventry, England (26 August 2016)

The Society for the Environment (SocEnv) has welcomed calls by the Parliamentary Audit Committee (EAC) for a ban on 'microbeads'. In a report published this week, the EAC said that banning microbeads in bathroom and cosmetic products was a good first step in tackling the wider issue of microplastic pollution.

The Society represents over 7,000 environmental professionals and encompasses professional bodies with a collective membership of over 500,000. We are using this credible voice to add its weight in support of the Parliamentary Environmental Audit Committee in the call for the cessation of the use of microbeads.

SocEnv echoes the Committee in their belief that microbeads are too damaging to the marine ecosystem and that voluntary reduction in their usage does not go far enough to tackle the issue. While SocEnv accept that microbeads do not form the majority of microplastic pollution, we applaud it as a positive, short term, solution towards mitigating environmental damage, pre-empting potential health effects and bringing the issue to public prominence.

Going forward, SocEnv believes it is important that there is further definitive research and assessment into the impact of microplastic pollution upon human health. We hope that the results of this research can inform government and form the basis of effective regulation that can significantly reduce the introduction of damaging pollutants into our marine habitats and ecosystems. This is an opportunity for the UK to become an environmental standard bearer on the world stage outside of the EU.

Dr Peter Matthews, SocEnv Chair, and Dr Emma Wilcox, SocEnv CEO, have written to ministers urging them to consider the recommendations of the EAC.

Dr Emma Wilcox said: "We are pleased that potential new environmental law is being based upon research and sound advice; we believe this is the way all new regulation and legislation should be drafted. We are also happy to see that they do not want to stop here, but also recommend further research into the issue of microplastic pollution as a whole. We seriously hope that Government acts upon the recommendations of the EAC and that this ban is enacted."

**END**

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#### **NOTES TO EDITOR:**

The Society for the Environment, is comprised of 24 Constituent Licenced Bodies, with 500,000 members. It received a Royal Charter in 2004, which empowers it to regulate the Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) qualification in the UK. There are now over 7,000 CEnvs who share a common vision of delivering

sustainability through environmental professionalism. Further information can be found at [www.socenv.org.uk](http://www.socenv.org.uk). A list of Constituent Bodies is given at the end of this Press Release and this demonstrates the diversity of membership.

#### **About Dr Peter Matthews**

Peter Matthews is a Chartered Environmentalist, Chartered Chemist, and Water and Environment Manager. He has held a variety of senior positions in the environmental field, in both the private and public sectors. After a career in the water industry spanning almost 35 years, he retired from Anglian Water International as Deputy Managing Director International in 1999. And after serving on the board of the Environment Agency and as Chair of the Northern Ireland Utility regulator, he was appointed in August 2012 as Founding Chair of the Welsh Government's new body for managing natural resources in Wales, Natural Resources Wales NRW, a position he held until December 2015.

#### **About Dr Emma Wilcox**

Emma has been CEO of the Society since July 2015 and since joining the organisation has led the development of a new five-year strategy increasing registrations and profile for Chartered Environmentalists and Registered Environmental Technicians.

Her career has spanned a number of disciplines including scientific research, knowledge and technology transfer, skills and education, programme and business management and stakeholder and relationship management. Emma's strong academic background is supported by an in-depth knowledge of both public and private sector landscapes.

#### **The Licensed Bodies of the Society for the Environment are:**

Arboricultural Association (AA)  
Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE)  
Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT)  
Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)  
Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)  
Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM)  
Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM)  
Energy Institute (EI)  
Institute of Agricultural Management (IAgrM)  
Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF)  
Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)  
Institute of Fisheries Management (IFM)  
Institute of Materials, Minerals & Mining (IOM3)  
Institute of Water (IWater)  
Institution of Agricultural Engineers (IAgrE)  
Institution of Chemical Engineers (ICHEM)  
Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)  
Institution of Engineering Designers (IED)  
Institution of Environmental Sciences (IES)  
Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMECHE)  
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)  
Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC)  
Society of Environmental Engineers (SEE)  
Society of Operations Engineers (SOE)

